

FUNERAL RITES THIS MORNING

Claire McCardell, Noted Dress Designer, Dies In New York Hospital



Claire McCardell
(Mrs. Irving D. Harris)

Claire McCardell, internationally known fashion designer and a native of Frederick, died Saturday morning at nine o'clock at New York Hospital after an illness of nine months. She was 52.

In private life, she was Mrs. Irving D. Harris and resided at 151 East 79th street, New York city.

Miss McCardell specialized in outdoor and sports styles favored by college girls and introduced the "casual look". She insisted on clothes without "gadgets" and the distinctiveness of her designs depended on line and color, often with unusual fabric treatment. Leotards were one of her innovations.

She was born in Frederick, May 24, 1905, a daughter of Mrs. Eleanor Clingan McCardell, formerly of Jackson, Miss., and the late Senator A. LeRoy McCardell, a native of Frederick. She was a graduate of the Frederick High School in the class of 1923 and then spent two years at Hood College before entering the Parsons School of Design in New York city and Paris, from which she graduated.

Her career, which was to make this Frederick native a world-wide reputation as the chief exponent of the "American look", had its ups and downs until 1932, when with the late Robert Turk as her mentor, she went to Townley Frocks to model and sketch. His death that year left her responsible for completion and showing of the line he had planned. Her success got her the job as top designer for the firm.

From that time on, Miss McCardell became one of the leading designers of the country. Her "Monastic" and "American Classic" dresses swept through the market and World War II brought the "Pop over" wrap-around house dress. In 1954 the Frank Perls Gallery in Beverly Hills, Calif., put on what was described as probably the first retrospective exhibition of costume designs of a single designer ever held in America—to honor Miss McCardell.

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In 1948, she received the Neiman-Marcus award in Dallas, Tex. for distinguished service in the field of fashion. She won a number of other awards, including the American Fashion Critics award for her "Popover" dress in 1942, the Mademoiselle Merit award of 1943; the "bronze statuette" that same year from the American Fashion Critics for the most influential designing of the year; the selection by American retailers of fashion merchandise as the nation's best in the "Ten Best Designers Poll" of 1946, and the Woman's National Press Club award in 1950.

She had been associated with Townley Frocks since 1932 and had been vice-president of the firm since 1952.

Miss McCardell was author of the book "What Shall I Wear", which was published in 1956 and met with considerable success. It first appeared in McCall's Magazine.

Miss McCardell was married to Mr. Harris, a New York architect, in 1943. She had visited at her former home here upon a number of occasions over the years and had many friends in Frederick.

She was a member of Evangelical Reformed church and Sunday school, of this city.

She is survived by her husband, two stepchildren, John and Miss Elizabeth Harris, New York city; her mother, and three brothers, Adrian L. McCardell Jr., Charleston, W. Va.; Robert C. McCardell and J. Malcolm McCardell, both of Frederick. One niece and four nephews also survive.

Funeral services will be held this morning at 11 o'clock from Trinity chapel, this city. Interment will be in Mt. Olivet cemetery. In lieu of flowers, the family requests contributions be made to Memorial Center for Cancer Research, New York city, or Memorial Fund of Frederick Memorial Hospital. C. E. Cline and Son, funeral directors.

EXCHANGE PROGRAM DRAWN